

Atari Files Suit Against Adult Theme Video Games

SUNNYVALE, Calif. (AP) — Atari Inc., "outraged" by sales of X-rated video game cartridges that have angered Indian and women's groups, says it will go to court in an effort to keep them off the market.

The company, a leading manufacturer of the popular games, "does not condone or approve of this use of its home video game technology" and plans to file suit to block the games' distribution and sale, said Michael Moone, president of Atari's consumer electronics division.

"Atari, like the general public, is outraged by this conduct ..." Moone said Friday, adding that the company intended its products for "wholesome family entertainment."

He gave no specifics about the planned suit, but said that after "further review ... Atari has decided to seek legal action against the manufacturer of the offensive game cartridges, American Multiple Industries, and the distributor, Mystique."

The games, which sell for \$49.95, about \$10 to \$15 more than most other video games, were unveiled Wednesday by the Northridge-based company.

"Our object is not to arouse, our object is to entertain," said Stuart Kesten, president of American Multiple Industries, in an interview earlier this month. "When people play our games, we want them smiling, we want them laughing."

Kesten, who was in New York on Friday, said the games will not be pulled off the market because he does not consider them pornographic.

The cartridges will be available nationally within two weeks, and Kesten said he expected to sell half a million by Christmas.

"We just couldn't see adults playing with space ships any more," he said.

One of the games, "Custer's Revenge," gives players points for "joining" a female figure representing an Indian maiden and a male figure without pants, representing Custer.

In another game, "Bachelor Party," players try to help a figure representing a bachelor escape from rows of figures representing women.

American Indians have protested the cartridges, particularly "Custer's Revenge," and women's groups say the

games condone sexual violence and rape.

About 100 people from a women's organization and American Indian groups protested Friday in New York, where one of the games was on display at an audio-visual show.

"It's absolutely disgusting," said one of the protesters, Lois Red Elk of the American Indian Movement.

Kristen Reilly of Women Against Pornography said "Custer's Revenge" is a game of "attack and rape."

Michael Bush of the American Indian Community House in New York said the game provides "a reinforcement of the stereotyping of American Indians as something less than human."

The game's creator, Joel Miller, denied in an interview in New York that Custer rapes the woman. "He's seducing her, but she's a willing participant," he said.

The X-rated cassettes are the first known adult games created for use on Atari equipment. American Multiple, a year-old company, until recently only made plastic storage cases for video and audio cassettes.